



Atlantic Highly Migratory Species Research Plan

Dr. Richard Merrick

Director Scientific Programs & Chief
Science Advisor for Fisheries

Atlantic HMS Research Plan

- ❖ Prepared in response to HMS AP and ICCAT Advisory Committee concerns about external HMS research funding
- ❖ Useful for internal and external prioritization and funding decisions
 - Similar to Stock Assessment Improvement Plan model
- ❖ Final document in preparation



Atlantic HMS Research Plan

- ❖ Agency document with input from partners
- ❖ Changes based on comments:
 - Resource needs will be included
 - Prioritization of research needs will be addressed
 - 5-year planning horizon
 - Designed so species sections are independent so some sections are repeated

Atlantic HMS Research Plan

❖ But...

- No immediate new funding
- Future funding increases are uncertain as overall budgets flatten or decline
- Budget constraints may change how we prioritize HMS research, including historically funded projects



Atlantic HMS Research Funding

❖ FY 11 Internal Funding

- NEFSC = 700K; 4.3 FTEs, 2 surveys, tagging, tourn. sampling
- SEFSC = 5M; 11 FTEs, observer programs, larval survey, sampling, tagging, biological research
- HMS = 107K; habitat, survey

❖ FY 12 Internal Funding

- NEFSC = 1M; 5.3 FTEs, 3 surveys, tagging, tourn. sampling
- SEFSC = 5.1M; 12.5 FTEs, observer programs, larval survey, sampling, tagging, biological research
- HMS = 107K; habitat, survey



Atlantic HMS Research Funding

❖ FY 11 External Funding

- NEFSC = 31K to states for EFH surveys
- SEFSC = 1.1M; Grande Bluefin Tuna Year program, tagging
- HMS = 225K; shark survey, genetics

❖ FY 12 External Funding

- NEFSC = 31K to states for EFH surveys
- SEFSC = TBD; Grande Bluefin Tuna Year program, tagging
- HMS = 65K; genetics



Next Steps

- ❖ Finalize Research Plan
- ❖ Distribute to partners
- ❖ Use the plan to prioritize and plan





Questions?